1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Maria names, though, of course, very few Bison-horn women's names were collected. A noticeable difference is the absence from the Hill Maria of names given according to the day of the week on which the person named was born, such as Budhi (Wednesday), Mangru (Tuesday) and Lakhmu (Thursday); it has already been noted that the Hill Marias have no names for the days of the week. 551 177

Weaning

A child is breast-fed until it can both walk and take its own food by hand, sometimes as long as three years. Unlike the Bison-horn Marias, the Hill Marias have no weaning ceremony. 862

Education

There is no system of training Hill Maria children corresponding to the Gotul or Dormitory system of the Murias, except in the northernmost Hill Maria *parganas* of Padalbhum and Nurbhum. In the greater part of the Maria country, children learn simply by accompanying and imitating their parents and the elder boys of the village. At night the boys who are old enough to leave their mothers sleep in the communal dormitory, and in the evenings they sit outside the dormitory round the fire with the men of the village. When the corn is ripening and the men sleep in the field-houses, in many villages the dormitory is closed, and the boys sleep with their fathers or elder brothers in the fields. Thus from his earliest days the child learns the routine of village and tribal life from constant association with his elders. He is made to do his share of the field work, and taught the use of the bow and arrow and the setting of snares. Children of six and seven of both sexes join in the village and clan dances, very quickly mastering the steps. We have seen how they use bamboo *pak-dol* drums to master the rhythm of drumming. In the ordinary hill village there is nothing corresponding to the Muria custom of the dormitory owning and cultivating a field or fields and applying the proceeds either to dormitory feasts or to the purchase of beads; but in the Barsur Mar villages and, therefore, probably elsewhere in the Abujhmar hills fathers encourage children to keep their own pigs, which they sometimes sell to procure money or grain for buying beads and knives. Girls similarly soon learn domestic routine from their constant association with their mothers. They cannot associate with boys in the manner of the Murias, among whom every girl must attend the boys' dormitory every night and has her own *gotul* 'boy-friend' to serve, since these *gotul* unions must be between couples who could legitimately marry under the rules of exogamy, and in nearly all Hill Maria villages all the boys and girls are of the same clan and therefore kindred. Yet the girls make bead fillets, ear-tassels and necklaces for the boys, and the latter carve wooden combs for the girls. 861

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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861 The complete *gotul* organization is a feature of Muria and not of Hill Maria culture. But as it has extended to Padalibhum and Nurbhun (possibly also to parts of Tapalibhum and Behra Mar) among the Hill Marias, a brief account of its salient features will not be out of place; it may be expected to spread into the hills with the gradual improvement of communications. A fairly full account from my notes on the Murias has been printed in the *Census of India* 1931 *Report*, Vol. I, Part III B., pp. 81-3. It may be added that it is easier for the Marias of Padalbhum to copy their Muria neighbours because Padalibhum not only has two or three villages which are not Padali villages but belong to the Nuroti and Usendi clans, but even in Padali villages has settlers of these two clans, which are *akomama* (wife-clan) to them.

[858] Boys and girls of an age to visit the *gotul* dormitories are known as *leyur* and *leyas* respectively. All the boys assemble at the 857 dormitory in the evening for dancing, games and social and sexual 571 training, sleeping on there after the departure of the girls to their homes late in the night. The girls attend at the dormitory in the 864 evening, each girl being paired off with a boy of an *akomama* clan. The girls have to comb their boys' hair and massage their arms and legs, to dance with them, and to be initiated into the mysteries of sex with them. Marriage frequently follows these dormitory unions, but by no means always does. Children are expected to attend the dormitory from the age of eleven or twelve, and the parents may be fined for not sending them. Every boy and girl has a special dormitory name or rank; the smaller children have designations which are little more than names, but those of the elder boys change as they are promoted, and involve special duties. The Hill Marias seem to have adopted the ranks for the boys only, the girls retaining the name given them on their entry until they leave the dormitory organization on marriage, but taking among their fellows the precedence of their boy-mates in the dormitory.

[177] In Padalibhum the head boy of the dormitory is always known as the *leyur-gaita*, and below him the *gotul* officials are the *leyur-majhi*, the *silledar*, the *jaliarsi*, the *laharu*, the *baiddar* and the *kamdar*; of these, *silledar*, *baiddar* and *kamdar* are Hindi terms copied from the titles of State or zamindari servants; in many a Muria dormitory all the office-holders have such designations instead of the old native names. Besides these names or designations to which

[557] special duties and privileges are attached, they have for the boys the names Jalka, Jolsai and Joria, and probably others. The girls' dormitory names ascertained were Jaliaru, Lahari, Manjaro, Nirosa, Jhelo, Gujaro, Piyosa and Belosa. At a camp at Partabpur attended by Hill Marias from Padalibhum, the *leyur-gaita* of three

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village dormitories were present. All were Padali by clan from Padali villages. Their dormitory mates were respectively Lahari, a Nuroti girl, Jaliaru, an Usendi girl, and Niroea, a Nuroti girl; and despite their different designations, these girls were the head-girls of their villages in virtue of their boys' ranks. Another Usendi village in Padalibhum called its head boy Silledar, and his mate was Jhelo, a Padali girl. All four stated freely that they expected ultimately to marry their mates, and that they and all the other dormitory boys often had sexual intercourse with their girls.

The dormitory in these *parganas*, as among the neighbouring Murias, is really a school for training the youth of both sexes in conjugal and social duties and in the lore of the clan; the dormitory office-bearers are practically prefects and monitors. The headman and other elders of the villages frequently call on the head-boy for the help of his boys and girls in field-work; but here they are not paid wages, as among the Murias, but are only fed by those for whom they are working. They are also asked to help in thatching houses and building granaries. In weddings the girls are expected to sing, and boys to collect fuel and leaves for cups, and both have to dance; they have similar functions at the various new-eating festivals. The head-boy imposes fines for unjustifiable absence from the dormitory, or from weddings and festivals, or general disobedience of his orders or those of other office-bearers, a bottle of *mahua* spirit being the usual penalty, the cost of which falls upon the parents. The head-boy's mate has similar powers of fining other girls. At the nightly meetings of boys and girls at the dormitory there are dancing in season, tale-telling, singing and games, and from an early age boys are given practical lessons in sexual intercourse.

B. Bison-horn Marias

The information which I was able to collect on this subject among the Bison-horn Marias is much less full than that given above for the Hill Marias, and needs further testing and considerable supplementing.

During pregnancy the mother carries on her ordinary work. The only note which I have of any disability attaching to pregnancy is that when the flesh of animals slain in the *weta* ceremonial hunts is divided up and eaten, no share may be given to the husband of a wife who either is pregnant or has her monthly period. In most Bison-horn villages there is no menstruation hut, and in their houses there is no menstruation room. A few villages near the foot of the Abujhmar hills have a hut where young girls are

[See cat. 116, pp. 425-426. - Aug 1951]

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even her kicks are sweet.' A study of ghotul offences and the type of punishment awarded, therefore, may be expected to throw some light on Muria notions of morality and the inner life of chelik and motiari.

Their offences, of course, cannot be understood properly except against the background of the general moral and social life of the tribe. To the Muria, as to most aboriginals, tribal solidarity is the supreme good, and anything that breaks this precious unity and fellowship must be condemned. Individualism is the great sin. For this reason, quarrelling and homicide are rare, theft is almost as uncommon. There are few who refuse to share the common work and interests of the community. Adultery is bad, not only because it infringes the rights of another Muria, but because it breaks up the carefully regulated domestic system of the people, and threatens to disrupt it by jealousy and hatred.

We have already seen the stress laid by the Muria on work. Slackness and laziness are very severely regarded, and are the commonest sources of friction between wife and husband. Cleanliness, decency, decorum and modesty are virtues much prized. A quiet and kindly attitude is expected of the tribal leaders; the bully and the coward are equally disliked.

Against this background, what sort of actions are condemned by ghotul opinion and punishable in ghotul law? Let us first consider those actions that are held to betray the common interest. They are doubly important, for in the highly specialized and concentrated fellowship of the ghotul, the general tribal instinct for unity becomes intensified.

II

Quarrels in the dormitory are strongly condemned. They are disturbing to the peace of ghotul life and specially offensive to so gentle and uncontentious a people. Children are fined for this, and may even be expelled. In Khutgaon there was once a very quarrelsome chelik. After a time, the leaders of the ghotul called him and said, 'Do you want to be in the ghotul or outside it?' The dreaded threat of expulsion brought him to his senses and he gave no more trouble.

The betrayal of the ghotul fellowship by repeating outside anything that happens within its walls, especially any stories of the intimate relations of chelik and motiari or some scandal about a pregnancy, is one of the greatest of ghotul crimes, for 'that which comes from the mouth bears fruit throughout the world'. Once at Gorma, the Kotwar and Belosa revealed to the village that a girl was pregnant; they were expelled and told that they would never be readmitted. Only when they brought a lot of liquor and fell at the feet of each chelik in turn, promising never to offend again, were they allowed to return.

Ghotul solidarity is constantly emphasized by the use of the ghotul title, and proper names may never be used between members. If a young child forgets this and addresses, say, his elder brother by the name that is always used at home, the others explain the custom to him; but if he offends again, he is punished.

The dormitory has to be kept clean. Though spitting is permitted, anyone who urinates inside the building is punished. This prohibition extends, in some places, to the court outside. To break wind is not a very serious offence; the children laugh at the offenders and call them *padra* or *padri*. Only a light punishment is imposed. At Rasbar the culprit had to salute

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every boy in turn saying, 'Johar, *mahārāj*, I have farted'. An interesting rule prohibits the other boys and girls from laughing at the offender too much. The name *padva* may be used three times but not more; anyone who carries the joke too far is fined.

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FIG. 103. A brass tobacco-box made by the local Ghasia
Actual size

A bed-wetter is punished with the *khoda-pahara* described below; if incurable, he may be expelled.

Most ghotul are actually kept beautifully clean; occasional lapses are severely penalised. It is the special duty of the girls to sweep and cow-dung the building, but often the Kotwar in charge of them is punished instead. At Kabonga, when the Diwan found that the ashes of the previous day's fires had not been cleared away, he reported the matter to the Inspector who called the Kotwar and threw ash all over him. The Kotwar insisted that it was the girls' fault, not his, and so the girls were called and ash was thrown over them and pushed into their private parts. At Kokoti also, two girls were tied to the roof by their feet and ashes put into their vaginae. 'As you've let the ghotul be dirty, we are making your privates dirty', said the boys.

It is generally the *chelik* who have to see to the surroundings of the ghotul. At Palari in 1941, the Munshi, Sipahi and Likandar were told to clear a space in front of the building for a dance, but they failed to do so. They were hung together from the roof until they begged forgiveness and promised to do the work at once. The younger boys are often punished for failing to bring their daily tribute of wood—a task they all dislike. In the Jamkot

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ghotul there was a boy called Antar (from a hunter-whip) who had the duty of 'whipping' boys who failed in this task.

Chelik and motiari are insistent that everyone must take an equal share (though not always the same share) in the common labour and common recreations. Failure to attend the ghotul regularly is punished; an absence of two or three days, unless there is a very good excuse, means a fine. It is specially bad for the motiari to absent themselves. This is regarded as a really serious offence, an infringement of the chelik's rights, a breach of ghotul fellowship; it raises the suspicion that the girl is having an affair with a married man or a member of another caste. On the other hand, if a girl enters the ghotul during her menstrual period she must provide liquor and perhaps a more substantial sacrifice to appease Lingo Pen whom she has offended.

A girl's conduct is controlled when she visits another village. She may go to the ghotul to dance and even perhaps massage and comb the boys but she is expected to return home before bedtime. If she does not, and the boys of her own ghotul discover that she has betrayed them, they punish her with a heavy fine.

The motiari are often obstinate and troublesome—at least in male opinion—and have to be disciplined. Sometimes they get sulky and refuse to join the games and dances; the Jnlaro of Sarandi was fined an anna for failing to attend a dance. Sometimes they refuse 'to let a boy play with them on the ground'; sometimes they fail to comb or massage properly. At Kajen the ghotul Kotwar reports every Tuesday whether any of the girls have lost their combs, or have refused to do the chelik's hair.

It is regarded as very offensive for a chelik to force a girl against her will: in Markabera a chelik once forced the Alosa, who was the ghotul-wife of another boy, and was fined as much as two rupees. But if a girl refuses—once she is mature—to have intercourse with at least one of the chelik, there is consternation, and if she persists, both boys and girls may refuse to attend her wedding.

Boys also may be punished for failing to fulfil their social obligations. At Palari, the Baidar and Dafedar refused, on account of some private spite, to attend the Captain's marriage and each was fined four annas. At Gorma the headman's son, who went to school and learnt there to despise the ghotul and its ways, found when the day of his marriage approached that the boys and girls would not attend it. 'All these years', they said, 'you have despised us. You have not joined our dances or helped us in our work. Now you can get married without us.' The boy had to dress in all the Muria ornaments, change his little cap for a turban, and sleep in the ghotul for a week before he was forgiven.

III

Ghotul officers who fail to perform their duties are punished. No one is privileged and no one is exempt. This is an important point. Were an older man, like the Diwan of Masora who still holds office at the age of forty, to try to protect his own son or daughter, he would himself be fined even though he was the leader and a final court of appeal in all disputes. If the head of the chelik tried to protect his own special motiari or his ghotul-wife, he might be turned out of office. Bindo had no hesitation in punishing the Dulosa, who was his lover, for failing to clean the ghotul.

Mangru of Masora told us how when he was Pahardar it was his duty to punish people. But he could never bring himself to do it, so he himself was punished. His legs were tied to the roof and he had to hang there while boys and girls sang one Relo song. A former Chalki of the Jamkot ghotul

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was similarly punished for failing in his duty to make the chelik and motiari work at a wedding. As a boy Bindo punished the ghotul Kotwar for disobeying his orders to fetch the motiari in the evening; fifty years afterwards he still remembers the incident with satisfaction.

When the head of the ghotul is penalized, it is a convention in some ghotul that the motiari should beg to be punished in his stead. This happened at Chandabera when I was there, and the Sirdar was fined for not making proper arrangements for his visitors. The girls implored to be allowed to suffer for him.

FIG. 104. A sun and moon tobacco-box
Height 2¾"

FIG. 105. Boy's necklace, from Kajan, of cowries strung together with red and 'silver' beads

Should the head of the ghotul turn out a bully or a slacker, the chelik and motiari take the help of the village headman and remove him. This does not happen very often because there is plenty of time to test a boy before he is appointed. But it is not always possible to judge how far power is likely to corrupt character, and scandals do occur. I have recorded a number of cases from the history of the last few years. In Mannegaon, the Leyur-Gaita was removed for bullying and abusing the children. The Malik of Esalnar was once degraded for bullying. The Kotwar of the Berma ghotul a few years ago got very much above himself and used 'to punish for four hours instead of one' until the members rebelled. They fined him a rupee, deprived him of office, made him a 'subject' with the name of Silledar, and appointed the Kandiki in his place. Recently in Kehalakot the Kotwar gave so much trouble to the girls that he was fined eight annas and removed.

Laziness also disqualifies a boy from holding high office. In Atargaon the Manjhi was dismissed 'for not working properly'. The Kokori Chalki was degraded to the rank of Kotwar for laziness and the Kotwar was appointed

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in his place. The Belosa of Berma was removed because she was too slack to control the girls.

I have only once heard of a boy being removed from office for abusing his sexual privileges. In Sonawal the Diwan seduced another chelik's 'wife'. The others fined him, but he refused to pay, saying, 'I am your master, I am not going to pay a fine to my "subjects"'. He and his own wife, the Diwanin, or head of the girls, were both degraded and made 'subjects'.

IV

We now turn to breaches of the sexual conventions of the ghotul. Here, according to the type of ghotul, two opposite types of offence are recognized.

In those ghotul where there is a rule against 'pairing off', boys and girls are punished if they sleep together too often. The Subedar and Silo of the Binjhli ghotul were fined four annas each for sleeping together every day. In these ghotul too it is considered very bad form for a boy to be 'possessive' about a girl, to be jealous over her and claim her as his. 'We must change every two or four days, or we are fined.'

But in the other type of ghotul, boys and girls are fined for committing what may be called 'ghotul adultery'. A case of this has already been described in Chapter XI. If a chelik sleeps with another boy's motiari during her 'husband's' absence, he is fined. If the Kotwar 'finds the cloth of a girl' who is not the boy's 'mate' on his mat, he reports the matter and the boy is punished.

In villages where there are separate ghotul for boys and girls, they may be fined for visiting one another on days when this is taboo. In Lihagaon, where there were separate dormitories for boys and girls, some years ago the Likhen of the boys was Lamhada to the Mularo of the girls. One night she came to the boys' ghotul and slept with him—a double impropriety since engaged couples are not supposed to sleep together in the ghotul. He was fined a rupee by the chelik, but refused to pay, and on the third day ran away with the girl whom he had already made pregnant. They were brought back and fined two rupees. This time they paid up, and the ghotul members agreed to the marriage and said they would attend it.

With all the freedom of the ghotul, there is a strict insistence on decorum and modesty. It is remarkable that at weddings when the older women and men behave with a complete lack of restraint, abusing each other and catching hold of each other in the most obscene manner, the motiari are never molested. The chelik are sometimes punished for showing an indecent interest in the girls even in the ghotul. Once at Palari the girls were dancing the Durpa Dandi, or Lotus Stalk Dance, when each girl rests one leg on her neighbour's waist. It is considered a rather risky dance and the girls rarely perform it in public. The Kandki of the ghotul sat down near the dancers and tried to peep up in a rather unpleasant manner. The girls stopped dancing and took him inside the ghotul. 'What were you sitting down for?' 'Nothing.' 'You wanted to look at us, you dirty little beast, so we're going to punish you.' They tied his hands together and bound them to the roof for fifteen minutes. When he was released, he had to salute each of the girls in turn and beg forgiveness.

V

How does the machinery of ghotul justice work? How are its punishments inflicted? I will give one or two actual examples before proceeding to tabulate the penalties.

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GHOTUL DISCIPLINE

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In the first week of November, 1940, the older boys of the Masora ghotul were away watching the field-crops and the Chalan was in charge. For several

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FIG. 106. The ghotul Kotwar's wooden spears
Lengths 6' 1" and 5' 1"

FIG. 107. Iron spears used by the chelik in hunting
Lengths 6' 6" and 5' 5"

days five of the girls—Belosa, Tiloka, Piosa, Janka and Alosa—had reported to him that they too were going to watch the crops. Actually, however, they went to sleep at home. Probably they found the ghotul dull without

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the bigger boys; possibly they simply wanted a rest. On 4 November the Kamdar who, in the absence of the older boys, was attending to the girls' behaviour, reported to the Sipahi (ghotul 'policeman') his suspicion that the girls were deceiving them. That night they watched and found their belief well founded. They returned to the ghotul and told the Chalan. The Chalan issued orders that when the girls next came to report, they should be arrested and given the stick-punishment.

The next evening, when the Janka and Piosa came to say they were very sorry but they must go to watch in their fields, the Kamdar and Sipahi stopped them. But the girls abused them violently—'You can drink our urine, but you won't punish us, *mailotia*'—and ran away. When this was reported to the Chalan, he went to consult the Diwan, an older married man who exercised general supervision over this ghotul. The Diwan said, 'Call all the girls tomorrow night, and certainly punish them'.

On the afternoon of the 6th, therefore, the Kamdar went round the village telling all the boys and girls that they must attend, for 'tonight there will be a judgement in the ghotul'. But when the time came, Belosa, Tiloka and Piosa refused to come. The Chalan sent the Kamdar and Sipahi to bring them by force.

When they were at last assembled inside the ghotul—and it is noteworthy that neither the Diwan nor the older boys thought it necessary to attend: they were content to leave it to the juniors—the Chalan asked the Belosa whether it was true that she had been sleeping in her house, and why. She replied, 'There was no wood for the ghotul fire; it was cold; so I slept one night at home'. This retort, which implied that the boys had been failing in their duty of providing wood, and was probably true, was hardly tactful. The Chalan became abusive and pointed out that there was plenty of wood. 'You slept at home every night; you are all sleeping with married men.' Then he examined the other girls, but they refused to answer. At last the Alosa cried, 'It was only one night; all the other nights we were sleeping in the fields'.

No witnesses were called; everyone knew the girls were guilty. The Chalan said, 'What punishment will you have? Choose!' The motiari made no reply, so the Sipahi said, 'Why not make them get up and down a hundred times holding their ears?' 'No', said the Chalan. 'The stick-punishment would be better.' Hearing this, the Belosa broke out, 'Why should you punish us at all? We haven't done anything.' The Chalan replied, 'Well, why didn't you come to the ghotul? Why don't you answer our questions? We'll certainly punish you if you don't speak properly.'

But the girls were still silent, so the boys pushed them out of the ghotul and shut the door. The girls were now really frightened and did not dare to run away. They crouched against the wall in the cold, while the boys discussed their fate round the fire. At last the Chalan said to the Sipahi, 'Bring in those *bōploti*, and give them the stick-punishment'.

So the door was opened and five very subdued girls were brought in. The Chalan asked if they were ready for punishment and they said they were. The Kamdar brought in five thick logs, and put them between their legs, making them squat on the ground, away from the wall, their arms folded. They were sentenced to 'two Relo'. This meant they were to sit like this, and very uncomfortable it is, while the boys sang through two Relo songs. During the second song the Alosa touched the ground with her hand and was immediately slapped and pushed over by one of the boys. The Janka began to cry, and the boys roared with laughter. When the Relo songs were

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finished, the Chalan asked the girls one by one if they would offend again. When each promised to be good in future, he let her get up. The girl who slept was forgiven last. Each girl had to go round the circle of boys and salute them with a smile. Then said the Chalan, 'That's finished. Now comb our hair and massage us, and we'll go to sleep'.

Less severe treatment was given to the girls at Bandopal, when I was sleeping in the ghotul on 25 April 1941. At about 10 o'clock at night, as the dancing and games came to an end, I was surprised to see all the girls filing out of the courtyard and sitting by the gate. The Manjhi had discovered that the verandah of the main building, where he and the other leaders slept, had not been properly cleaned. He sent for the Belosa and Dulosa and ordered them to take their girls out of the compound. They did so, no one took any notice of them, the boys lay down and slept as usual, and for a time the girls sat quietly outside the gate. Presently a subdued and penitent voice called, 'Silledar, let us come in'. There was no reply. Then very seductively and sweetly, 'Kotwar, do let us come in'. Still no reply. There was a pause, and then two or three girls at once cried, 'Manjhi, let us in and we'll do anything you want'. This went on for half an hour, and then the Manjhi sent the Kotwar with four other boys to interview the girls. The panchayat squatted down on the near side of the gate and there was a long consultation. At last, the girls promised never to neglect their work again and the Kotwar went to report to the Manjhi who was sleeping on the verandah with a few of the senior boys. He told him to bring the girls in. They filed in and went to the Manjhi. He again made them promise to keep the ghotul clean, then forgave them and told them to massage him and the other senior boys as a penance before they went to sleep.

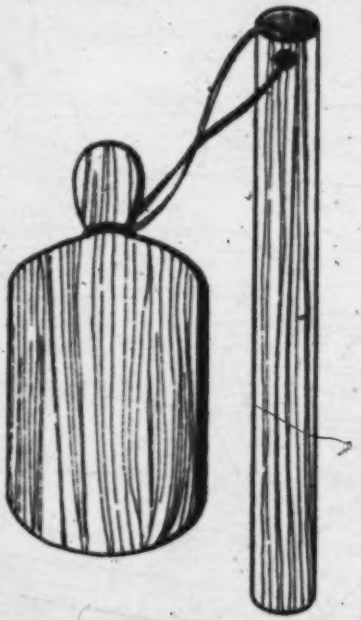

FIG. 108. Toy wooden records used by the Kotwar of the Naria ghotul
Length of upright cylinder 1'

In the Chalka Pargana, in such villages as Kajen, Chimri and Temrugaon, the chelik imitate very closely the ordinary police procedure of the State. The ghotul Kotwar has a wooden spear (Fig. 106) in imitation of the State Kotwar's spear, and a wooden tablet (Fig. 108) which corresponds to the village report-book. It is his duty to report once a week (just as in fact the village watchman reports once a week) to the Inspector of Police, who records the information and if necessary takes it to the Diwan. Fines are paid in pieces of wood or siari seeds, a piece of wood representing a rupee. The thing has the semblance of a game but it is taken very seriously, and a fine of fifty 'rupees' means quite a lot of work.

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THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

The following incident is typical. At Palari the Jhalko went to Banjora for a week in January 1942 and while she was away the Nirosa and Jhankai stayed away from the ghotul for five days. The Kotwar inquired into the matter, and made his usual report to the Havaldar who in turn referred it to the Inspector. The Inspector went to the Sirdar, the head of the ghotul, and reported that three girls had been absent.

'Have you examined them?' asked the Sirdar. 'What was their excuse?'

'I questioned them, but they had nothing to say.'

The girls were brought before the Sirdar and in cross-examination it came out that Jhankai had a sore place, and Jhalko claimed that she had been away in another village.

'Did you get the Kotwar's permission to go?'

'I asked him, but he didn't say anything. What was I to do? My parents told me to go.'

Witnesses were called to show that Jhalko stayed away for two days more after she had returned.

The Sirdar then pronounced sentence. The Jhalko would get up and down twenty times holding her ears. The Nirosa, who had no excuse at all, would do it eighty times, and the Jhankai fifteen times. This sentence was carried out, but the Nirosa managed to get hers reduced in appeal to ten. 'But I will count very carefully', said the Sirdar.

Afterwards the Sirdar asked the girls, 'Now you've been punished. Was it fair or are you angry with us?' Each of the girls in turn said, 'No, it was perfectly fair; I was guilty'.

On 25 March 1941, one of the boys at Chimri pretended to be a visiting official; he came into the ghotul and complained that it was dirty, there was no wood or fire. He sent for the Kotwar and Manjhi, who came with folded hands, and he abused them, fining them ten 'rupees' each. Another day the Kajen Kotwar reported to the Inspector that he had noticed on a boy's mat a cloth which belonged to a girl who was not his ghotul-wife. The Inspector pretended to write this down in his 'book', and sent the Constable who handcuffed the two lovers with lengths of siari twine and brought them to the Tahsildar. He lectured them and fined them five 'rupees' each. They appealed to the Diwan who enhanced the sentence to twenty-five 'rupees' or bits of green wood.

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These examples will be sufficient to show how the machinery of ghotul justice works and which officials are involved. It sounds like a game, but is taken very seriously. We have seen how the Kotwar or other boy with similar duties first discovers and reports an offence. It is investigated by the Thanedar or Inspector, who in turn brings the culprits before the Tahsildar. Finally the leader of the ghotul considers the case, pronounces judgement and inflicts punishment. In those ghotul which have some older man still holding office an appeal may lie to him. There is often a boy whose special duty it is to carry out the sentence.

The punishments inflicted are of some variety. We have already seen the *khotla pahara*, or stick-punishment, in operation. Sometimes the stick is put through both legs and arms and the hands are tied in front. In Kajen it was the Tahsildar's special duty to see that the victims did not support themselves against the wall or ground.

The *porokal werhana* or *pahara erator* is more severe. Hands and feet are tied and the victim is slung from the roof by his feet, remaining topsy-turvy while the others sing one, two or three Relo songs.

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Kanna taliyana is the very common Indian punishment of making someone squat down on the ground and get up and down holding his ears with his

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FIG. 109. Tobacco pouch with bell and tusk ornaments
Height of pouch 3½"

hands. It is difficult, exhausting and undignified. But it is not very painful and it leaves no trace, which probably accounts for its popularity among subordinate officials. In Lihagaon, pebbles were held to the ears while the culprit was pushed up and down twenty-five to fifty times. This was how the Manjhi punished Dursal Rani in the song recorded at p. 608.

At Nanipodar, the chelik connected this punishment with a story of a Raja and a dancing girl of the Mirdangiya caste—whose girls are famous for their wit and beauty.

> There was a Mirdangiya. She danced before a Raja. He was so pleased that he said, 'Ask what you will and I'll give it to you'. She said, 'Spit on the floor and then lick up the mess'. The Raja said, 'How can a Raja do such a thing?' Then the Mirdangiya said, 'Very well then, give me the turban from your head'. He did so and she wore it herself and went away well pleased.

The movements of a girl jumping up and down holding her ears are supposed to resemble the Mirdangiya dancing before the Raja, and the chelik taunt the girls saying, 'Ho re Mirdangiya! Today you've become Mirdangiya'. To which the girls reply, 'We are Kanchnin [good and beautiful] girls. If we were Mirdangiya we would be dancing and you'd have to give us your turbans.'

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The boys laugh and say, 'Then it was the Raja who was punished, now it is the Mirdangiya'.

Nit mandana or *kal nilana pahara* is a simple punishment of expulsion and endurance. A boy or girl is made to stand outside the ghotul fence on one leg with the other leg pressed against it, while the others sing a number of Relo songs.

The *nagil puhana pahara* or plough-penalty is fairly common as a punishment for breaking wind. One chelik pulls the legs of the victim and two push down his shoulders; legs are pushed and shoulders pulled until he is exhausted.

In the *porokal karhana* the culprit is made to spread-eagle himself from the roof and to hang there till permitted to come down.

The *korit pahara* is simply a 'pushing about' punishment. Everybody pushes and smacks and pulls the victim about till he cries for mercy.

In Masora they sometimes tie the culprit's hair to the roof and make him stand like that for so many songs. Sometimes his hands are tied together up to the roof.

It will be noted that these punishments can be described, shall we say, as chronic rather than acute. The sharp, abrupt sting of corporal punishment so familiar to the European schoolboy is unknown. The punishments, in so far as these are physical at all, involve the endurance of discomfort and distributed pain, and above all the loss of dignity. This is perhaps what we would expect of so gentle a people to whom the catastrophic decisiveness of a flogging would appear intolerable. Even the punishments must be associated with something beautiful; they are endured to the sound of music, the rhythmic movements of the Relo songs.

A fine is a very common form of penalty. In the ghotul the fines are almost always interpreted in terms of bits of wood or siari seeds. A fine of ten rupees probably means ten bits of green wood (dry wood is brought by the younger boys in the daily routine), a fine of a hundred means a hundred siari seeds. This type of substitution is not confined to the ghotul. In Bandopal I once saw a root sacrificed instead of the pig the villagers could not afford, and elsewhere I have seen sticks given in place of chickens—sacrificed and treated exactly as if they really were chickens.

The seed-fines are collected until there is enough to invite the whole village to a party. Any monetary fines are usually put in charge of the village headman for safety, and used to buy liquor. The seeds are fried as a relish; liquor is distributed; and it is said that during this party the chelik and motiari recount the history of the fines and penalties of the past year to the amusement and benefit of all.

The most dreaded punishment is expulsion from the ghotul. A foretaste of this is given to very small boys who fail to bring their daily wood, when their elders refuse to accept their Johar in the evening. The little boy goes round the circle saying Johar, but each chelik looks through him and refuses to answer. This soon reduces the child to penitence and he promises never to offend again. If he does, or if the little girls fail to clean the building, they may be sent to sit outside the door for two or three hours. This is regarded as equivalent to excommunication. It is a rather pathetic sight to see a little boy or girl, in the cold winter or the rains, crouching lonely by the door while the others enjoy the warmth and company inside. Occasionally a boy or girl is forbidden to join the ghotul expeditions or go to a marriage. Sometimes members are actually expelled—incurable laziness, obstinate refusal to submit to ghotul discipline, a quarrelsome temperament, the breach of

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clan and relationship rules may lead to this extreme penalty. It is indeed extreme, for it means the death of youth, the loss of company and the shame of a wedding without dancers.

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FIG. 110. Carved tobacco-box from Nayanar
Actual size

That is, in fact, the final sanction of the ghotul rules—the fear that the chelik and motiari will refuse to attend one's wedding. It is no idle threat; it has been done; it has been still more often threatened, and the parents have had to pay a fine. Once at Jhakri the Piosa failed to do her share of bringing leaves at someone's marriage, and the boys said, 'This girl is too great for us. She evidently likes to be alone. Well, she shall marry alone'. When her marriage day arrived there was a great disturbance and the elders of several villages had to pacify the offended boys. But at last, after her parents had given a gift of liquor, they agreed to assist.

No reader of Chapter V can fail to see the importance of this threat. No wedding can proceed without chelik and motiari. Their absence would mean that on the greatest day of one's life there was drabness, mockery and disgrace. So long as this ultimate sanction remains, the youngsters submit cheerfully to all the penalties, harsh as they may sometimes seem, that the leaders of the ghotul may inflict.[1]

[1] Anyone who thinks the ghotul discipline too hard should read a curious paper by Thurston on 'Corporal Punishment in Vernacular Schools' in India, in which forty-two different manifestations of pedagogic sadism are listed.—*Ethnographic Notes*, pp. 433–40.

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It may be of interest to compare these penalties with the disciplinary measures taken in other village dormitories. There is a curious account in an old book on the Chittagong Hill Tract by Captain Lewin, who was Deputy Commissioner of this area and seems to have been a man of considerable sympathy and knowledge.

> In the village communities, even as the adults have a recognized head, so also is there a head boy appointed to control the boys of the village. This head of the juvenile community is called the *goung*. I shall give here, as illustration of their village customs, a recital which I heard told at the camp fire one night in the jungles, by one of our policemen of the Palaingtsa clan. He said: 'I was formerly *goung* over the unmarried lads of Hmraphroo village; this was when I was about seventeen years old. At night all who were unmarried, and weaned from their mothers, used to sleep in the *khiong*. One night Ougjyn, and Reyphaw, and Chaindra, came to me and got leave to go and sleep with their sweethearts. The girls were named Aduhbyn, Hlapyn, and Aduhsheay. I remember their names quite well; they are married now, and two of them have children. Our lads went by stealth, of course: if the parents had known it there would have been a row. Next day a little girl told me that Pynhla, another of our lads, who had not got leave to sleep out, had passed the night with her sister. This was quite contrary to rule, and it was therefore determined to punish him. Next day we all went to the Raja's *joom* to help to build his house, and in the evening, when we returned, we made a big fire on the bank of the stream that runs through the village; and I sent and called Pynhla, but he was afraid, and would not come; he stayed in his father's house, and said he had fever. I knew this was only an excuse; so I sent three lads to bring him forcibly, and they went and brought him, although his mother abused them much; but the father and mother could not hurt them, as they were acting by the *goung*'s order. When he came, I called upon him to say why he had slept away from the *khiong* without leave. At first he denied all about it, and then I brought forward the little girl, and he asked her, 'How did you know it was I? It was dark'; and she said, 'The moon shone on your face in the early morning when you opened the door to go away'. When he heard this he saw there was no escape, and he fell at my feet and asked forgiveness; but I fined him three rupees on the spot for the sake of discipline.[1]

In the Uraon *dhumkuria*, as in Bastar, many different punishments are inflicted. In Mandar the boys described the penalty for not keeping the dormitory clean; if any animal or bird dirtied the place they had to make the excrement into little balls with their own hands and throw it away. If a boy wet his bed, they said, the others stuck a pin into the ground and spat on it; the offender had to pick it up with his own teeth. In the middle of the ruined dormitory at Agru I saw a fine stone pillar. Boys who failed to attend the dances were forced to hop round this five times with two bits of bamboo tied tightly to their legs. Fines were also inflicted.

Roy has described the 'slit' in the central pillar of 'some of the *dhumkuria*' and connects it with a fertility ceremony in which the boys insert their 'penile

[1] T. H. Lewin, *Wild Races of South-Eastern India* (London, 1870), pp. 118ff.

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organs' into a slit in a sal sapling.[1] In *Oraon Religion*[2] he says that this is to be found 'in most *dhumkuria* houses'. He only mentions the name of one village, however, Borhambey. We saw the slit there, but did not find it in any of the other dormitories we visited, nor has W. G. Archer been able to find any trace of the custom elsewhere.

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FIG. 111. A tortoise tobacco-box
Height 4¾"

FIG. 112. *Mavka-batta-gota* or mango tobacco-box
Height 2½"

It is probable that the 'dormitory slit' was chiefly used for punishing refractory boys. According to the *dhangăr* who talked to Shamrao Hivale at Mandar, it was used as a punishment for boys who were shy or sulky and refused to join in the communal games and dances. 'A lump of red earth is put on the pillar, and the Mahato stands by with a stick, and hits us on the legs and tells us to push our penis into the earth, and then he pushes us against it again and again till we become red. If a boy is sulky, we bring him at night to the *dubri* (mistress) and we push his penis into the slit until he cries and promises not to offend again. We all hit him and push him to and fro against the pillar till his penis hurts and he cries.'

Discipline in the Naga morung is, as we might expect, more rigorous and the punishments more drastic. 'Among the boys of the village', says Mills,

> there is a certain amount of rough play, and a bumptious or obnoxious youngster is taught his place exactly as he is in an English Public School. He may sit down in the dark and find stinging leaves have been put ready for him. Or a more elaborate punishment may be inflicted which many a mother in England would not approve of for her darling. A plank is laid like a see-saw over a log. One end is weighted down with a wooden pillow. The boy has to jump on the other end and the wooden pillow flies up and hits him on the back of the neck.[3]

There is nothing in Bastar to compare with the Naga bullying, a process by which young boys are hardened to face every kind of danger and difficulty.

[1] Roy, *The Oraons*, p. 243. [3] p. 33.
[2] Mills, *The Rengma Nagas*, p. 32.

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'Men who are now middle-aged say that when they first entered the *morung* they were very severely disciplined, not to say bullied. They were, for instance, held over the fire and compelled to endure the heat without a cry. Or they were made to show their pluck by being sent alone on a dark night to fetch a bamboo from a certain clump. The boy sent was allowed no torch or weapon, and had to gnaw the bamboo through with his teeth or hack it off with a sharp stone. Or, again, a boy would be sent to leave a torch at some particular spot far away in the jungle and come back alone in the dark without a light. In the morning the older boys would go and see if the burnt remains of the torch were in the proper place. Nowadays boys have an easier time, but a considerable number of duties falls to their lot, and for the first three years a boy's life is very like that of a fag at an English Public School. Boys of the lowest class must keep a supply of torches in the *morung* for travellers passing through the village late in the evening; they have to massage the bigger boys' legs when they come in tired from the fields; they are responsible for the wood and water needed for cooking; they must make pipes and sharpen *daos* for their seniors. In fact, for three years they have to do what they are told, and do it quickly—a most excellent system.'[1]

VIII

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Hitherto we have considered only the trivialities of ghotul discipline. The sexual relationships of chelik and motiari give rise to far more serious problems. I discuss the large question of ghotul pregnancies in a separate chapter: here we must consider how far life in the dormitories encourages breach of the clan-laws or leads to incest between near kin.

There are the strictest rules against clan-incest. Do they work? It is not easy to give an answer. That clan-incest is possibly not uncommon may be gathered from such sayings as 'When the door is shut there are no clans, we are only chelik and motiari'; 'Once the door is shut and the fire dies down, all relationships are levelled out'; 'Our tribal rules extend to the border of the sleeping-mat; we watch the youngsters as far as that; what happens inside that country no one knows'. It was the opinion of an educated Muria that the chief danger of the ghotul was that it promoted intimacy between members of the same clan and even exposed near relatives to unnecessary temptation.

It is impossible to say. Even if I filled pages with village gossip it would prove nothing. Only an exact statistical inquiry could answer the question whether the Muria chelik was prone to incest or no. And that could never be obtained. But certain things may be affirmed.

At first sight, considerable freedom appears to be allowed. A motiari may comb the hair of a boy of her own clan, and may massage him. Even a close relation like an 'own sister' may do this. In Kabonga the Muria said that girls and boys of the same clan might sleep together, but must not have sexual intercourse. At Kajen in 1940, all the boys and girls were of the Halami sept, except one girl who was a Kuhrami. Yet they went daily to the ghotul and slept together there. They denied that they had sexual intercourse. This may be true, but no reliance can ever be put on a denial in Bastar. In the Metawand ghotul I found the following pairs 'married' to each other—Partabi and Maravi, Wadder and Maravi, Maravi and Maravi, Maravi and Katlami, Maravi and Wadder, Maravi and Maravi, Kuhrami and Maravi. In Dongrigura, in 1940, nearly all the ghotul members were Sori, save one or two Naitami and Kuhrami. The Pahardar and Pahardarin were 'married':

[1] Mills, *The Ao Nagas*, pp. 179f.

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in the Mardapal Pargana and along the north-eastern border in just those areas where the dormitory system is moribund. The ghotul has almost disappeared from the Mardapal Pargana, and the system is rapidly decaying along the border. A policeman told me that in his opinion ghotul-education was a most valuable preventative of crime, for boys and girls learnt to share everything and to scorn acquisitiveness and the lust of possession.

To lie and cheat is reprehensible, but does not seem to be taken very seriously. It all depends on whom you are deceiving. It may well be a positive virtue to give an inquisitive ethnographer a false date for a ceremony or direct him to the wrong village when he wants to see a funeral. To break an oath or take a false oath is not so much an offence against morality as to do something very dangerous. In Binjhli I was told of a former Pargana Manjhi who stole a lot of rice during a famine. He was put on his trial, but took a powerful oath that he was innocent. As he walked out of the court, 'his eyes broke' and he became blind.

Muria ethics, therefore, combine a firm belief in taboos and the danger of breaking them, with a faith in the value of certain amiable and social virtues. The Muria are a closely knit tribe; as their culture is still living they are bound together by many ties. They therefore regard as most reprehensible those faults and crimes that would break the solidarity of the tribe—anger, jealousy, assault, adultery that leads to these things, the practice of magic that divides a community with hatred and suspicion, the breach of tribal laws of relationship which destroy its unity, and the breach of the laws of endogamy which destroy its integrity. Those virtues are most admired which bring men together in peace and happiness—a gentle tongue, an open hand and house, the love of wife and children, loyalty to tribal law.

In conclusion, let us for a moment look at the ghotul from our own Western standpoint, and try to assess the value of the Muria attitude to life and especially to sex not by their standards but by ours. It is not the business of the ethnographer to pass moral judgements, but he may perhaps imagine himself talking to a Christian missionary or a devout Hindu reformer, both of whom take so different a view to the Muria's, regarding sex as bad and dangerous in itself and any form of 'unchastity' as the worst of sins. Is there anything to be said for the Muria way of life?

In the first place it must be said that the chelik and motiari are wonderfully happy. Their life is full, interesting, exciting, useful. The ghotul is, as they often say, 'a little school'. The chelik are 'like Boy Scouts', as I was told in a village which had a troop in the local school. There is no comparison between these children and the sad-eyed, dirty ragamuffins of villages at a similar cultural level elsewhere. In the ghotul the children are taught lessons of cleanliness, discipline and hard work that remain with them throughout their lives. They are taught to take a pride in their appearance, to respect themselves and their elders; above all, they are taught the spirit of service. These boys and girls work very hard indeed for the public good. They are immediately available for the service of State officials or for work on the roads. They must be ready to work at a wedding or a funeral. They must attend to the drudgery of festivals. In most aboriginal villages of the Central Provinces the children are slack, dirty, undisciplined, and with no sense of public spirit. Even those who attend school generally only develop a strong desire to advance their own interests at the expense of their fellows.

With all this our missionary and Hindu friends will be in agreement. 'But', they will say, 'that is not the point. Our complaint is that these youngsters

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sleep together.' It is at least one point in their favour that this sleeping together does not seem to do them a great deal of harm.[1] There are no signs of corruption or excess; these bright-eyed, merry-faced boys and girls do not give you the impression of being the victims of bestial lust. They are living a life of fulfilment and it seems to do them good.

They do sleep together, but—as we have seen—under conditions of discipline and some restraint. Children in other aboriginal villages also have sexual congress but without discipline and restraint. The aboriginal and semi-aboriginal boys whom I have known for the past ten years in the Mandla District all too often begin their sexual life before the age of twelve and indulge in it freely till they are married and after. It is notorious that venereal disease is rampant throughout aboriginal India, and some of the most pathetic sights I have seen have been cases of young boys and girls with syphilis. Reports from other parts do not suggest that customs vary greatly in this respect. I have no hesitation in saying that for the areas that I know intimately, there is more sexual excess among young people in ordinary villages than in ghotul villages.

Another interesting and curious point is that there are few people with a stronger sense of domestic morality and conjugal fidelity than the Muria. Adultery is very rare, and is visited with supernatural punishment when it does occur. You could not find happier or more united families. One of the reasons for this is that the ghotul system discourages the custom of child-marriage which is rapidly spreading through aboriginal India. Among romantically-minded people, child-marriage means, inevitably, domestic infidelity. Boys or girls find themselves tied to partners in whom they have no interest and naturally leave them and seek others. Another reason for this remarkable fidelity among the Muria is that in many ghotul boys and girls are 'married' and are taught the necessity of fidelity to their partners. In the other type of ghotul, they grow up from their earliest years to believe that though change is the mark of the unmarried, stability must characterize the married. Once a girl is in your *haq* or 'right' she must stay there and you must stay with her.

Now one of the great evils of semi-aboriginal India is domestic infidelity. Divorce is universal, elopement common, adultery an everyday affair. The ghotul villages have a much higher moral standard in this respect. Figures are startling. The incidence of divorce in Bastar is under 3 per cent. An examination of 50 marriages in Patangarh village in Mandla District showed 23 divorces or 46 per cent.[2]

[1] "This early promiscuous intercourse does not appear, as far as I can see, to affect these races prejudicially, many having a fine physique and contrasting as a rule favourably with the Aryan races of the plains."—S. E. Peal, 'On the Morong' in *JAI*, Vol. XXII (1893), p. 248. Peal was for 26 years resident in east Assam. And Dr Clifford Allen in an important book published by the Oxford University Press says, 'It is essential for the health of the individual that normal sexual contacts should be made as early as possible. It should be noted that all savage tribes living in a state of nature encourage their young people to marry as soon as possible. . . . We have been told *ad nauseam* by cleric and moralist that continence does no harm to anyone; that the moral character is strengthened by abstinence and so on. This we do not believe. The sexual organs consist of gland and muscle co-ordinated with the nervous system. No other organs are improved by disuse, so why should these be exceptions? Again, the nervous system does not improve if some instinctual urge is obstructed, and indeed we know for certain that the obstruction of strong instinctual urges leads only to their breaking out in some abnormal channel, as when the starving man chews bits of wood and leather to allay his hunger. We believe the same is true for the erotic instincts.'—Allen, *The Sexual Perversions and Abnormalities* (Oxford, 1940), p. 167.

[2] See my article, 'The Duration of Marriage among the Aboriginals in the Maikal Hills', *Man in India*, Vol. XXII (1942), pp. 111.

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The *bakito*, the highly organized men's house of the Bororo of Brazil, has been described as 'a public school where the children are taught spinning, weaving, the manufacture of weapons, and above all singing'.[1]

Stack and Lyall deplore the fact that the boys' club—the *deka*—of the Mikir, which is such a 'useful form of co-operation', is falling into desuetude. Villagers like having *deka*, they say. They help greatly in cultivation, practise dancing and singing, and keep alive the village usages and tribal customs. They are in great request at funerals, which are the celebrations in which most spirit is shown.[2]

Parry speaks with approval of the discipline maintained in the Lushei dormitories. 'A young Lushei as soon as he is six or seven years old is no longer allowed to sleep in his father's house, but is sent off to the *zawlbuk* and becomes the fag of the older boys. Very strict discipline is maintained; the younger boys are obliged to work for the older, are taught to wrestle, are punished when disobedient, and generally are imbued with a sort of public school spirit, with excellent effect on their character in after-life.'[3]

He regrets the absence of the institution among the Lakher. To this fact he traces the lack of discipline in a Lakher village. 'A young Lakher when ordered to do something by an elder will argue, where a Lushei would obey at once . . . I ascribe much of the indiscipline among the Lakhers to the fact that they have no bachelors' house.'[4] Their morals also suffer. Bachelors do not sleep in their parents' houses, nor even, as among the Paithes, in the verandah of the chief's house, but in the house of the girl they happen to prefer at the moment. As soon as a boy reaches a certain age, 'he is no longer allowed to sleep in his parents' house, but is sent off to join the young men in some house where there are unmarried girls. This arrangement is not conducive to morality, and has the further disadvantage that the boys lose the disciplinary training of the bachelors' house'.[5] Mills also praises the *morung* discipline among the Ao Naga. For three years the boys 'have to do what they are told, and do it quickly—a most excellent system'.[6]

Indrajit Singh, a Hindu writer from the Central Provinces, in spite of some inaccuracies in his general account, well summarizes the function of the ghotul in Muria society:

> It is an institution that has manifold uses. It teaches social habits to the youths of both the sexes. It trains them in post-marital behaviour and makes them useful members of society. It inculcates a feeling of tribal discipline, provides a focus for the sentiments of the people and prepares the younger generation to discharge those social and economic obligations without which collective life of any kind can neither grow nor thrive.[7]

All external interference in tribal custom is risky: it is fatal when it is based on ignorance and prejudice. I have already quoted Mills' warning to the American Baptist Mission in Assam: 'In forbidding their converts to use the *morung* and in undermining it as an institution the Mission are taking a very dangerous step, from which they would surely have shrunk if they had

[1] V. Fric and Paul Radin, 'Contributions to the Study of the Bororo Indians', in *JAI*, Vol. XXXVI (1906), p. 388.
[2] E. Stack and C. J. Lyall, *The Mikirs* (London, 1908), p. 12.
[3] N. E. Parry, *The Lakhers* (London, 1932), p. 28.
[4] Ibid., p. 28.
[5] Ibid., p. 247.
[6] Mills, *The Ao Nagas*, p. 180.
[7] Indrajit Singh, *The Gondwana and the Gonds* (Lucknow, 1944), p. 72.

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girl's first menstruation is marked by special rites of purification. There is little conscious education of the young who grow up in natural freedom and learn by imitation. Marriage is generally adult, but is arranged by the parents and the cross-cousin marriage is common. Betrothal ceremonies are simple. The boy's father goes with gifts and a traditional formula is used—'We have heard there is a flower growing in your garden. We have come to pluck it and put it in our hair'. If a boy's family cannot afford the bride-price required, they may send him to serve as a Lamhada in the house of his future wife. His period of service is for three or five years, and the marriage is often celebrated before it is complete. Marriage by capture, which was probably the traditional method, has not yet died out, and occasionally there is a case of the reverse tradition when a girl comes as a Paitu and forces herself upon a man who is bound to marry her. Widow-remarriage is permitted and indeed enjoined, the husband's younger brother having the first claim on the person and property of the widow. Divorce is rare but is available to either husband or wife. The wife usually achieves it by eloping with another man and the husband in most cases accepts a *fait accompli*.

The actual marriage ceremony is also simple. There is no annointing with turmeric or oil, no perambulation of the sacred pole. Customs vary from place to place, but the traditional marriage has probably only three elements—a celebration which includes feasting, drinking and dancing, the pouring of water from the roof of a house or shed onto the bridal pair and the ceremonial consummmation of the marriage at which bride and bridegroom are forcibly shut up in a room together.

VI

Funeral ceremonies are more elaborate, and since this book is concerned with death, we will consider them in greater detail.

Maria thinking about the destiny and state of the soul after death is as confused as that of more sophisticated people. At least three contradictory views of the subject are held at the same time. I think that the oldest and characteristically